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ABSTRACT

A comprehensive program for dealing with some of the key factors causing school dropout is described and evaluated. The Magic of the Mind program has four basic components, each addressing one of the following: (1) building self-efficacy in students; (2) teaching students learning skills; (3) teaching stress management to the students; and (4) building self-efficacy and stress management skills in teachers. Initial tests of the program at East Los Angeles Community College (California) with students (predominantly Mexican American) on scholastic probation have provided strong evidence of the program's effectiveness. Over a 1 and 1.5 year period, the MOM group increased an average of 3.8 grade points (grade points are equal to grade point average times units completed) and had a dropout rate of only 16% compared with the control group taught learning skills only. The control group's grade points decreased by an average of 5.45 and the dropout rate was 56%. Similar controlled studies are planned to test the program's effectiveness at the elementary through high school levels, but the program's effectiveness at these levels is already supported by considerable anecdotal evidence. The major reason for program success is thought to be its dramatic belief-building capabilities. By providing immediate feedback in all the techniques used, the program develops a strong belief in the ability to achieve for both students and teachers. (Contains 27 references.) (Author/SLD)

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ED 405 436

The Magic of the Mind (MOM) Program for Decreasing School Dropout

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Abstract

The Paper introduces a comprehensive program for dealing with some of the key factors causing dropout. There are four basic components to this program, called Magic of the Mind (MOM), each addressing one of the following factors: (1) building self efficacy in the students; (2) teaching the students learning skills; (3) teaching stress management to the students; and (4) building self-efficacy and stress management skills in the teachers.

Initial tests of the program at East Los Angeles Community College with (predominately Mexican American) students on scholastic probation have provided strong evidence of the program's effectiveness. Over a 1&1\2 year period, the MOM group increased an average of 3.8 grade points (Grade points = GPA x units completed) and had a dropout rate of only 16% compared to the learning-skills - only control group which decreased an average of 5.45 grade points and had a dropout rate of 56%. Similar controlled studies are planned to test the program's effectiveness at the elementary through high school level. The program's effectiveness at this level is already supported by considerable anecdotal evidence.

The major reason for the program's success is felt to be its dramatic belief-building capabilities. By providing immediate positive feedback in all the techniques used, a very strong belief is developed in oneself especially in one's ability to achieve, and this is for both students and teachers.

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The Magic of the Mind (MOM) Program for Decreasing School Dropout

There is no doubt about the continued need for a more effective solution to the school dropout problem. It is felt that many of society's current problems can be traced to the high number of school dropouts. As pointed out by Senator Ted Kennedy (1988): "Society pays for dropouts, too, through lost tax revenues, increased welfare costs and crime."

According to Braun (1993) the cost of school dropouts in the U.S. in terms of costs of imprisonment, welfare support, low wages and lost taxes is as high as $300 billion annually. And this high loss has been with us for some time now. For example, as reported in Jones (1977), the Select Senate Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity found that for the year 1969, 24-34 year old male drop-outs cost society $71 billion in lost tax revenues and the men themselves lost $237 billion in purchasing power. In addition billions of dollars more were lost in welfare expenditures.

Perhaps the crime and violence problem is the one of greatest current concern. Fear is escalating exponentially as gangs of juvenile dropouts and soon-to-be dropouts in cities all over the U.S. wreak havoc and death amongst the populace. A recent *Los Angeles Times* article (Nazario, 1994) reported that according to government data, the number of teenagers arrested for violent crimes jumped 50% between 1985 and 1991 and teenage deaths due to homicide rose 100% during this same period. According to the article:

> Teenagers fared particularly badly in California where hopelessness and an ample supply of guns combined to produce a powder keg. Arrest rates for juvenile crimes rocketed 60% between 1985 and 1991, giving California the fourth-worst ranking for juvenile crime in the nation. In addition, the proportion of California teenagers graduating from high school in four years dropped to 62% in 1991 from 67% in 1985 (P.3).

The connection between failure in school and crime has been known for some time now. As far back as 1977, Jones (1977) pointed out that the unemployed person who is a dropout is 6 to 10 times more likely than a non-dropout unemployed person to become involved in crime. An incredible 82% of America's prisoners are high school dropouts ("The demographics of school reform", 1990). And in some states, such as Texas, this percentage is as high as 90% ("Dropout Dilemma", 1990).

As a result of the escalation in crime, the majority of people are now calling for much greater numbers of prisons and an increase in the amount of prison time and punishment for violent criminals. Fortunately, there are some who are seeing beyond this and are pleading that a greater proportion of the increased expenditures for crime prevention and imprisonment, amounting to billions of dollars, be directed more towards improving our educational system.

In the words of hard core convict Wilbert Rideau responding to a Time magazine (Aug. 23, 1993) reporter's question "What do you think of Clinton's crime policy?":

> I'd like to see more efforts aimed at really improving people. Crime is a social problem, and education is the only real deterrent. Look at all of us in prison; we were all truants and dropouts, a failure of the educational system. Look at your truancy problem and you're looking at your future prisoners. Put your money there (P.33).

It may be true that some progress has been made in the past decade or two towards reducing the dropout rate, but I don't think anyone will deny that we still have a long way to go. The present article presents an overview of a promising program, called Magic of the Mind (MOM), for helping to eliminate the dropout problem.

The program attacks the dropout problem on four major fronts: (1) building greater self-efficacy in students; (2) effective teaching of learning skills to students; (3) teaching stress management to students; and (4) teaching stress management and building self-efficacy in teachers.

Most educators would agree that a major factor in the high failure rate of students at-risk is their poor learning skills. And it would appear that providing more learning skills classes would help solve the problem. However, as pointed out by Carns & Carns (1991):

> Traditional techniques often taught in study skill units have been shown to have limited benefits...Further review of the literature indicates that other variables may need to be considered when teaching study skill units, such as students' self-efficacy... Self-efficacy, or the belief in one's effectiveness, seems to be an important factor in student achievement behavior (Thomas & Rohwer 1986)... Self-efficacy is also defined by Thomas and Rohwer as the student's perceived self-concept of academic ability (P.341).

According to Bandura's (1977)classic study: "It is hypothesized that expectations of personal efficacy determine whether coping behavior will be initiated, how much effort will be expended, and how long it will be sustained in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences (P.191). And Bloom (1977) said essentially the same thing when he stated: "Where a student is convinced of his inadequacy he finds no great energy to accomplish the next task, has little patience or perseverance when he encounters difficulties, and takes little care and thoroughness in accomplishing the task" (PP 194-195).

In other words, unless the students at-risk can first be helped to believe in themselves and their abilities to control or master the events in their lives - especially with regard to their academic abilities - any attempts at helping them improve their learning abilities, such as study skills programs, are likely to fall on deaf ears. These students are so negatively conditioned against school from previous failures that any attempt at remediation is likely to fail because they will not even make the effort to try it.

However, it is not a simple task to try to change the at-risk student's academic self-concept. We are dealing with beliefs that have already started to solidify as early as

the third grade (Finn, 1989)and become even more deeply entrenched with increasing age. As indicated by Chapman and Boersma(1980):

> Clearly then the LD children in the present study are strongly characterized by their lower academic self-concepts. Moreover, these negative characteristics were well established at the Grade 3 level...Bloom (1976) and Hamachek (1978) have both pointed out that such relatively negative attitudes are generally established during the first few years in elementary school, often in response to repeated failure experiences in the heavily stressed area of reading. Thus, the present finding of low academic self-concepts associated with the LD children at the Grade 3 level is not surprising. (p.75) In addition, some studies (e.g., Kifer, 1975) have found that academic self-concept tends to be more negative in older low achieving students, presumably because their accumulated failure is greater. (p.2)

It is a mistake to assume that such deeply imbedded beliefs are going to be changed by some simple "pep talk" approach. *It is felt that the main reason it has proven so difficult to eliminate the high failure rate of students at-risk is that it is not that easy to change the deeply entrenched negative self-beliefs at the root of this failure.*

These are *desperate* times and *extra-ordinary* measures are needed. We need to now be more open to new, non-traditional approaches if necessary since the traditional ones don't seem to have been sufficient. We need to find a more effective way of bypassing all the accumulated negative conditioning long enough to implant a new and more positive self-concept, and one that is simple and easy to teach. Which brings us to the Magic of the Mind (MOM) Program.

It is felt that what makes MOM such an effective program for decreasing the dropout rate is not only the comprehensiveness of the approach but, more importantly, its considerable belief-building capabilities produced primarily by the immediate positive feedback aspect of the techniques used. The latter will be made evident as you are introduced to each of the four components of the program.

Building Self-Efficacy and Learning Skills in Students

The first component, developing greater self-efficacy is accomplished through a program called Self-Programmed Control or SPC (Barrios, 1985a) which, among other things, makes use of a series of simple but powerful demonstrations that dramatically illustrate to the students the power and magic of their minds. These techniques can be looked upon as belief-building techniques - belief in the power of one's mind, and thus play a key role in helping to build the students' sense of self-efficacy or belief in one's capabilities.

The demonstrations are based on the ability of thoughts to produce actual, automatic responses. This ability is first explained to the students in terms of principles of Pavlovian conditioning. Namely, that through repeated association, words and

thoughts can come to act as conditioned stimuli evoking those responses they have become associated with. This Pavlovian concept is easily gotten across with the "Lemon" demonstration where the entire group or class is asked to visualize as vividly as possible biting into a very sour, tart and tangy lemon. It is not long before everyone is salivating profusely and the point has been well made that because of prior conditioning, thoughts can indeed cause automatic responses.

It is pointed out that of course we know that words or suggestions don't always produce the appropriate response. That is why good advice often goes in one ear and out the other. But the capability of words and images to produce responses is always there. All we need to do is bring it out. This, then, is what the SPC techniques do. They are a step-wise, systematic procedure for producing a gradually stronger response to positive words and thoughts. Or to put it another way, the procedure increases one's belief in what he or she is trying to program in. ***Belief can be defined concentration on a thought to the exclusion of any contradictory thoughts.*** Thus, the stronger the belief, the greater the blockage of any contradictory thoughts and therefore the stronger the response to the thought being focussed on.

From this definition of belief we can see that as this state of heightened belief is created in the student at-risk, it becomes easier to implant a new stronger sense of self. This is because the ever present negative self concept (i.e., the contradictory thoughts) which has heretofore kept any new positive self-concept from getting through would now be automatically blocked in this state of heightened belief long enough for the new self-concept to take a hold.

One of the first "magic of the mind" demonstrations used to increase the students' belief in the power of their minds is the "Arms Demonstration":

The students, en mass, are first told to extend both arms out in front of them, slightly above eye level, and to make sure both are even to begin with. Then with the eyes closed, they are told to vividly imagine a huge helium filled weather balloon pulling up on the left arm and a heavy bucket full of water pulling down on the right arm. After about 30-60 seconds of this, they are told to open their eyes and look to see where their arms are.

When the students open their eyes and see how far apart their arms have (automatically) separated, they are amazed and a buzz of excitement can be heard going through the room. It is pointed out to them that there is no reason in the world why the "heavy" arm should turn out to be lower than the "light" arm except that in the one case they were focussing on thoughts of heaviness and in the other on thoughts of lightness, and that this is how the mind works.

You can talk about the power of the mind or the power of positive thinking until you are blue in the face and still not be able to get the concept through to most people (especially to failure-prone, negative thinkers). But one simple demonstration like this

and a light goes on. The individual can now begin to really believe in the power of thoughts, the power of the mind.

The next two "magic of the mind" techniques that are introduced, the Magic Pendulum and the Concentration Spiral, further add to this state of increased belief. In the Magic Pendulum technique the students are absolutely amazed to see the pendulum they are initially holding motionless (a paper clip on a string) begin to automatically swing in whatever direction their thoughts direct it. They are told that if their mind is strong enough to cause this pendulum to move by itself, they now know they can do just about anything they set their mind to. (It is explained to them that this movement is due to an automatic unconscious movement of their hand in response to the thought or expectation of the movement and that the greater the swing the more powerfully focussed their mind has become.) And if this is not enough to convince them of the power of their minds, the almost magical visual effects resulting from the increased focus produced by the Concentration Spiral (by far the most popular of the SPC techniques amongst the students) most certainly will.

Now the students are ready for anything that will help them to reinforce this new positive self-concept that has just been implanted. Thus, they will now be much more receptive to the next component of the program - *the learning-to-learn techniques.*

Effective Teaching of Learning Skills to Students

To further insure that the new positive self-concept will take a firm hold, the immediate feedback mode is also used to introduce the learning-to-learn techniques.

One of the first things done when introducing these techniques to the students at-risk is to get across the idea that: (a) "A" students or "geniuses" are not that way because they were born with an oversized brain but because they learned techniques for making full use of that brain; and (b) if the students use these same techniques they too can be "geniuses". Then to immediately get the point across that these techniques do work and are easy to learn, the students are shown a simple memory technique which they are told will allow them to memorize an incredibly long, 23 digit number (19452001555975414952345), something they would agree only a genius could do.

When tested on the number after applying the technique, approximately 95% of the students get it perfectly, much to their amazement and delight. Thus, the point has been well made - that if they know the right techniques, something that at first seems impossible, something only a genius could do, is now quite simple. It is emphasized to the students that the learning of techniques for memorizing long numbers isn't the important thing here. What's important is that they now realize that if they know the right short-cuts they too can be geniuses. Now their appetite is whetted and some additional, more practical short cuts and other ways of developing their mental capacity are next shown to them.

The learning-to-learn techniques taught to the students cover a variety of memory techniques, vocabulary building, test taking, problem solving, and above all reading and studying improvement techniques. In each area, the immediate feedback approach is

again taken. For instance, when the SQ3R (Scan,Question,Read, Recite, and Review)method for improving reading and studying ability is introduced, students are given an immediate in-class SQ3R assignment followed immediately by a quiz using questions similar to those in the SQ3R assignment. This in turn is followed by a series of SQ3R homework assignments and quizes.

Teaching Stress Management To Students

There is a strong message in the current literature that a need exists to develop programs to increase students' abilities to cope with stress. Low self efficacy, low self-esteem, underachievement, violent behavior, substance abuse and physical illness are just a few of the symptoms (as well as causes) of student stress (Chandler, 1985; Omizo & Susuki, 1988; Segal, 1983; Henderson, Kelby & Engebretson 1992). Thus, if we are to have a comprehensive approach for effectively dealing with the dropout problem, we must also include an effective stress management component.

The MOM program helps students to both decrease and cope with stress in several ways. First, there is the stress reduction that comes from the increased degree of self-efficacy and self-esteem produced by the program. Being more self assured and having a greater sense of control lessens the anxiety that might previously have been produced in situations where one's abilities are being tested or questioned. Secondly, the students are taught a set of positive mental attitudes aimed at helping them to roll with the punches: Learning to look for the good in a bad situation; learning that if you look for the good in others, you are more likely to bring the good out; if you make a mistake realizing that everyone makes mistakes and that you should learn from it what you can then forget about it; learning to look for the good or positive in oneself. These are some of the attitudes taught which help to lesson the stress reaction to various stressors in life.

Finally, use is made of a simple inexpensive biofeedback device called the Stress Control Biofeedback Card (Barrios, 1985b). This device helps to condition in an automatic relaxation response in times of stress - a safety valve so to speak - whether these stresses be school-related (exams, giving a talk in class, studying, etc.) or life-related. It acts as an excellent relaxation training tool by showing the students that they *can* change the color of the card (the stress level indicator) anytime they're stressed by simply applying one of the quick relaxation techniques on the back of the card. In addition to helping the students learn to relax, it also adds to their new sense of control and self efficacy - when they see that they can indeed change the color of the card through their own inner powers.

Decreasing Stress and Increasing Self-Efficacy in Teachers

It is felt that one of the major advantages of teaching the MOM program is that the instructors also get to benefit personally in many ways, especially in terms of being able to decrease their stress as well as increase their own self-efficacy. This occurs both

directly and indirectly as a result of the program. Directly, because as one of the prerequisites for teaching the MOM program, instructors are encouraged to apply the various components of the program for gaining greater control over their own lives, especially their teaching effectiveness and their stress levels. And indirectly, because the less stressed and more successful their students become, the less stressed and more successful they begin to feel.

And of course these positive changes in the teachers can only help them be more effective with their students. This is so, both in terms of increasing their own belief in the program as well as making them that much more effective at teaching.

The following excerpt from the Summary Progress Report of one of the instructors taking the SPC class for teachers at Cal State University Los Angeles will give you some idea of the benefits of SPC for teachers:

> I would like to take this opportunity to say how much I have enjoyed your program and that it has helped me tremendously. My summary progress report does not begin to evaluate the changes that have occurred since I began becoming less tense, my main goal.....As a result of being less tense (I have had the tendency to become very tense at school when the kids, I feel, are not learning or following standards), I have found myself getting more work done at school, getting reports and records done on time, and I feel my teaching has improved. My more relaxed attitude has affected the kids in that they seem more relaxed and cooperative. I have found things do not irritate me as much (such as Jack singing "Old MacDonald" in the back of the room and kids coming in late, no notes, no homework, etc). I also am less tense with my peers...I can honestly say now I am a more relaxed person, although I hope to become even more so. There are many other minor changes I have noticed in my personality and attitudes which are all positive. I still practice SPC daily and will continue. One very positive indication I have that I have achieved some control over tension is that I don't feel the necessity to take Valium anymore. It actually made me ill when I did and I was using at least 10 mg. daily. (Barrios, 1985a, P33)

That this was not just an isolated response was indicated by some of the overall results of the SPC instructors workshops:

> Perhaps the most impressive indication of the personal benefits of SPC for instructors are the Willoughby Test score changes resulting from instructors' workshops. The Willoughby Personality Questionnaire (see Appendix A) was originally designed as a measure of neuroticism but is a fairly good indicant of overall self-confidence and ability to deal with stress and cope with life (Wolpe, 1958). The Lower the score on this test the healthier the state of mind...In the first instructors' workshop - four sessions held at Golden State College - the average Willoughby score dropped from the 62nd to the 32nd percentile in the period of four

weeks. This type of improvement has continued right up to the latest class for teachers at Cal State University, where the average Willoughby score dropped from the 77th to the 40th percentile during the six-week class. (Barrios, 1985a, P.33)

Results Achieved Thus Far With Students

The first results achieved with the MOM program were described as near-phenomenal by the Dean of Students at East Los Angeles Community College (ELAC) where the first complete application of the program was begun as part of a Title III program to help disadvantaged Mexican American Students (Barrios, 1972).

In this study, use was made of a pool of 194 students on scholastic probation who were required to take a nine week study skills class. The students were randomly assigned to two groups. One group, of 105 students, was placed in a class where the MOM program was taught. The other group, a total of 89 students, was placed in five other classes, taught by five regular learning skills class instructors. An analysis of variance showed that there was no significant difference between these two groups when comparing their grade points for the previous semester. (Grade points = GPA multiplied by units completed). The following results were obtained:

(1) Over a 1 1\2 year period the average grade points increased 3.80 points for the MOM class while decreasing 5.45 points for the learning skills only (control) group. (The grade points for the semester following the class were compared with the grade points from the semester prior to the class). An analysis of variance showed that the total difference of 9.25 grade points was statistically significant at the .02 level (F=6.50). As can be seen, not used were the grade points for the semester during which the study skills classes were given. This was done to avoid contamination of the results that would have occurred by including the students' grade for the study skills class itself. Also, the students in both groups took comparable classes for the previous and following semesters so there was not contamination of results that might have resulted had the two groups taken completely different sets of classes.

(2) The average dropout rate was 16% for the MOM group vs 56% for the control group.(i.e., 84% of the MOM group went on to either graduate from ELAC or transfer to a four year college as compared to only 44% for the control group).

Note how the decrease of 5.45 grade points and 56% dropout rate for the learning skills alone group corroborates Losak's (1972) conclusion regarding the ineffectiveness of most remedial programs.

One additional finding of interest was that a high percentage of the MOM students overcame their substance abuse habits - a significant side benefit of the MOM class. The results of an anonymous questionnaire given to MOM students at the end of the class showed that in those students indicating excesses in the following areas these percentages cut down:

Food	78%	(100 of 129)
Cigarettes	73%	(52 of 71)
Television	86%	(120 of 140)
Alcohol	92%	(59 of 64)
Marijuana	72%	(31 of 43)
Other Drugs	83%	(16 of 19)

No concentrated attack had been made on the excesses. It is felt to have occurred mainly because of three major changes produced by the program: The general increase in the ability to relax; the greater enjoyment of other areas of life (resulting from a greater self-confidence); and a greater amount of self-control. Most excesses can usually be traced to a deficit in one or more of these areas.

Corroborating the above results is the data from subsequent MOM classes at UCLA for 372 disadvantaged students (primarily African-American and Mexican-American). For these students, the average Willoughby score - a measure of self-confidence (Wolpe, 1958) - improved from the 63rd to the 25th percentile and the average Study Habits Inventory scores (Wrenn & Larsen, 1955) rose from 11.92 to 73.42, where 15 is the median score for a standard group of college freshmen (Barrios, 1985a).

Although the MOM approach was first introduced at the community college and university level, it has since been introduced with highly encouraging results (Barrios, 1985a) at school levels ranging from kindergarten through high school as well as in community based programs like Head Start, WIN and CETA. (For the lower grade levels, e.g., K-3, only parts of the program were used). The results of the program with high school students and Head Start parents, for instance, and the fact that it can be taught effectively by others were presented in the report submitted to the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, which funded the original study (Mireles, 1971):

> The results have been highly encouraging. For example, at Garfield High School, the principal, Mr. Welsh, was so impressed with the response of the students from negative to positive outlooks, that he has requested Project USTED to conduct classes as soon as possible for his instructors, students and classified personnel in addition to his parent advisory group....The Psychology 22(SPC) class being conducted in the heart of the barrio for Project ABC Head-start mothers has brought the response from several parents that if they had taken this course twenty years ago, they would not have gone through a life of low self-esteem. They requested that their children not be allowed to spend valuable years of their lives repeating their own mistakes. They have asked that we set up similar courses at the elementary schools where their children attend. Dr. Barrios did not visit these classes at any time, thereby indicating that it was the course and its content, rather than the special gift of any

particular instructor who was responsible for the results of the course. This, we feel, is a major breakthrough! (P.31).

The following is one of the typical high school student comments reported in the study:

> My feelings towards this class have improved considerably. At first, I thought it was just going to be another class to rap with the chicks and make fun of the teacher. In other words, a boring, out-dated, unendurable class. Not so! Lately I've become very interested and those words, coming from me, should be considered excellent.
>
> I've improved my self-image, I am participating actively in class, I'm not afraid of speaking out. In short, it has given me a positive attitude towards life. In contrast to before, where I was pessimistic, grouchy, and rowdy. Recently, I've noticed my outlook towards life has improved greatly... I only wish there were an abundance of these classes, with more teachers like Mr. Paez... As for this excellent class, I cannot express my delight and my gratitude. All I know is that the federal government should really go head on and stop pussy footing around - there is no better class that I know of in high school (P.32).

Plans are underway to supplement the above anecdotal evidence with large-scaled controlled studies to test the effectiveness of the MOM Program at the elementary through high school level. It is expected that the results of these studies will be similar to those achieved at the community college level.

SUMMARY

Much of the research done on the dropout problem has pointed to low student self-esteem and self-efficacy as major causative factors. Recent studies seem to also implicate high stress levels in both students and teachers as well as low teacher self-efficacy. The present study presented evidence that by effectively dealing with all of these factors one could significantly decrease student dropout as well as increase student grade points. The approach used to accomplish this was made up of three major components: (1) a set of "magic of the mind" techniques to increase belief in oneself; (2) A simple, inexpensive biofeedback tool (the Stress Control Card) to teach stress control; and (3) A set of learning-to-learn techniques.

The main reason for the effectiveness of this approach was felt to be the immediate positive results aspect of each of these three components.

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A SUGGESTED STEP -BY-STEP PROCEDURE FOR PRESENTING THE MAGIC OF THE MIND DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM TO STUDENTS

1. **Overview**

First give the students an overview of what you will be presenting them. For example: "I am going to introduce you to the Magic of The Mind program developed by Dr. Alfred A. Barrios as presented in his book Towards Greater Freedom and Happiness. These are a series of magical demonstrations that will not only show you the real power of your own mind but also how to tap into this power to become an A student."

You will then lead the students through the Magic of the Mind, Stress Control, and Learning to Learn techniques in very much the same way that I led you through them today. For those of you who have not gone through a Magic of the Mind demonstration, there is a 1 1/2 hour video of such a demonstration available from the SPC Center.

2. **Handing Out the Materials Used in the Presentation**

(a) **The Magical Pendulum**

First demonstrate how to make the pendulum - threading a piece of thread (about one foot long) through a paper clip and tying the ends. (Since you are doubling the thread, the finished pendulum will be about 6" long.) Then hand out the spools of thread and paper clips. When finished, tell them to put the pendulum away for later use.

(b) **The Stress Control Cards**

Before passing out the Stress Cards, first present an explanation of how they measure stress: "The cards **measure stress level** by measuring your fingertip temperature which is directly correlated with how stressed you are. After holding the card (black square between forefinger and thumb) for a long count of ten, a color will appear indicating how warm or cold your fingertips are. The colors go from black to red to green to blue as the temperature rises. Since the warmer your hands the more relaxed you are, a color of black indicates 'most stressed' and a color of blue indicates 'most relaxed'. The reason for this is that when a person is stressed, the blood tends to go inward to the muscles and away from the hands and feet."

Now hand out the cards and have each student measure his initial stress level. Be sure to point out that it is the color in the center - not around the edges - that they should go by. Ask for a show of hands how many got a black response; how many got a green response; and then how many got a blue response. Remember, it is very important that the room temperature not be too low or too high. A range of 70^0 - 74^0 is good.

Next point out that the real value of these cards is not just to measure stress but, more importantly, to **help you control stress**. The card becomes a training tool showing you that whenever you are stressed, you can change the color towards blue (most relaxed) by going through one of the relaxation techniques on the back.

Now lead the group through the breathing and hand warming technique. Be sure to emphasize that as they exhale each breath they are to let go completely - as if their body was like a balloon full to the bursting point and you were now opening the valve, letting out all the air at once and the balloon going completely loose and empty. Also as they exhale each breath tell them it will seem as if they are breathing warm air onto the back of their hands. Have the group then retest themselves with the cards and ask for another show of hands to find out what their color has now changed to. Point out that a positive response would be going more in the direction of blue. E.G., going from black to light green, or light green to dark green, or green to blue are all signs of a positive response.

3. **Introduction to the Magic of the Mind Techniques**

"Now I will introduce you to the Magic of the Mind techniques: The first step in learning how to tap into the power of your mind is to understand that this power comes from the potential of thoughts to trigger actual responses."

"Words and thoughts have the ability to produce real responses because they have been repeatedly associated with these responses over a period of time. For instance take the word or thought 'lemon'. Because of its repeated association in the past with the actual tasting of lemons it now has the ability to trigger the same response as if you were actually biting into a lemon."

(a) **The Lemon Demonstration**

Have the group go through the lemon demonstration - where you have them picture cutting a lemon in two then biting into first one half then the other. Vividly describe the tart, tangy, sour taste, etc. Afterwards ask for a show of hands to see how many found their mouths watering.

(b) **The Arms Demonstration**

Immediately follow the "Lemon" demonstration with the "Arms" demonstration. This is another powerful illustration of the basic principle that thoughts have the power to produce automatic responses.

Have the students extend both arms in front of them and slightly above eye level. Then with their eyes closed, alternately have them focus on a huge helium-filled balloon pulling up one arm and a heavy bucket of water pulling down the other arm. After 30-60 seconds of this have them open their eyes and look to see where their arms are and where other peoples arms are. Point out that there is no reason in the world why the "heavy" arm should be lower than the "light" arm except that in the one case they had been focusing on "heavy" thoughts and in the other they were focusing on "light" thoughts. Emphasize that this is the way the mind works! Thus, if you are constantly thinking positive thoughts, you are more likely to cause positive things to happen; and on the other hand if you are constantly thinking negative thoughts, you are more likely to cause negative things to happen.

(c) **The Power of the MOM Techniques**

Point out that the reason most people do not always respond strongly to their positive thoughts is because there are usually negative, interfering thoughts present at the same time pulling them in the opposite direction. "It's like a tug of war where the person usually winds up going nowhere. However, if a person could somehow focus just on the positive thoughts and cut off all the negative interference, then that person would be able to go very strongly in the positive direction. But how does one do this effectively?"

Point out to the students that this is what the Magic of the Mind techniques are all about. "The MOM techniques can be looked upon as a type of mental focusing. They are actually belief-building techniques that build a new belief in yourself - in the power of your own thoughts to produce positive results." Point out that: "Belief and mental focusing are related. Belief can be defined as concentration on a thought to the exclusion of anything that would contradict that thought. As you go through each of the MOM techniques and see yourself responding automatically to your thoughts, you begin to realize more and more that you really can do anything you set your mind to."

4. **The Magical Pendulum Technique**

"To further demonstrate the power of your mind we will now go through the Magical Pendulum technique:

(a) You will start by holding the pendulum like this. [Illustrate how they are to hold the pendulum with elbow resting on the arm of their chair (or on a table, or cupped in their other hand)]. To begin with, the paper clip will be almost motionless.

(b) Now start by focusing on the thought that the pendulum will begin to swing more and more in the left right direction. As you do so, you will find it actually starting to move in this direction. Once it starts to swing, tell yourself it will swing even more. It will be moving automatically. The amount of swing is an indication of how focused your mind has already become.

(c) To show you that you are in control, you can change the direction of swing by simply changing the thought you are focusing on. For instance, if you now start focusing on a circular motion, you will find it almost immediately start going into a circular motion. Again, you can increase the movement by telling yourself the circle will get larger. And the larger the circle, the more focused your mind has become. ...Letting your eyes close now."

(d) Now in this highly focused state you know you can have greater ability to do whatever you set your mind to. And one of the first things you are going to be able to do now is have greater control over the ability to relax. **Now** as you start focusing on your breathing and that wonderful letting go feeling as you let out each breath, you will **really** be able to let go completely and you will really be able to start feeling that nice warm feeling coming into your hands - as if you were breathing hot air onto them.

(e) As you become more and more relaxed now with each breath, your arm will start to float down. And your hand will automatically start to bend at the wrist. Soon, if you haven't already, your fingers will automatically be opening and you will be dropping the pendulum. (Continue to have the students focus on letting go with each breath for several more breaths.)

(f) From now on you will always be able to relax yourself whenever you are stressed or anxious by simply repeating this simple breathing, hand warming technique. This will help you with all different kinds of anxiety and stress: Exams, studying, giving a speech, social situations, etc.

(g) And you will find not only will you have greater control over the ability to relax in any situation but your mind in general from now on will be a lot more sharp and focused. And you will find that your memory powers and ability to learn are going to be increasing tremendously.

(h) Now as you open your eyes and feeling sharp and alert, take hold of the Stress Card once again and retest yourself to see how much more relaxed you have become."

Get a show of hands of how many students are now showing a more relaxed reading than the very first time they tried the card... A show of hands for how many are registering blue.

Please note that not only have you established in their minds that they will now have greater ability to relax in any situation but you have also implanted the positive thought that their memory and learning powers will be increasing tremendously. It is at this point that you now introduce the Learning to Learn techniques.

5. **Introduction to the Learning to Learn Techniques**

"To show you that you all have the potential to be geniuses, to be A students, I am going to start by showing you what a powerful memory you can have if you know how to use your head. The key to being a genius is not only to have a calm and focused mind but also to know the right techniques for increasing memory and learning abilities."

"The first thing you should realize is that top students or geniuses are not top students or geniuses because they have over-sized brains. They're top students because they've learned how to use their brains - because they've learned the easy ways to memorize, study, solve problems and take tests. I am going to introduce you to such techniques by starting with a memory technique that will show you that you too can be a genius."

(a) **The Numbers Memory Technique**

1. Write the number 19452001555975414952345 on the blackboard covering as much of the blackboard as possible.

2. Show the grouping procedure underlining each group: 1945 2001 555 9754 1495 2345.

3. Show the association procedure: 1945 - the end of WWII; 2001 - the movie; etc.

4. With the # still on the blackboard, and with their eyes closed have the group picture writing the # down. Tell them at this point they can still open their eyes to check themselves if they run into a block.

5. Erase the # and then have them write the # down on a piece of paper.

6. Write the # back on the blackboard.

7. Ask for a show of hands to see how many got the number perfect - e.g. ask how many geniuses there are in the room. And then how many almost got it perfect - how many near-geniuses there are.

(b) **The Names Memory Technique**

This technique is best demonstrated with a group of students who do not yet know each other by name - as in the beginning of a semester.

Start by telling the group that you are now going to teach them a memory technique whereby they will be able to memorize the names of 20 or more people in a row. Point out that most people have trouble remembering even one name; so memorizing 20 or more is something only a genius could do.

Discuss the simple basics of the technique first:

1. You first free associate to the person's (first) name - whatever comes to mind when you hear the name. Give them several illustrative examples: e.g., Al - pal; Joe - blow; John - Wayne; Brad - Pitt; Mary - quite contrary; etc.

2. You have them repeat the name with its association several times to themselves.

3. You then do the same with the next person.

4. After you have associated for this next person and before going on to the next one, go back and repeat to yourself the name and association for each of the previous people. Continue this "review" after each successive person.

5. At the end, ask for a show of hands of those who think they have memorized all the names. Almost every hand should go up. Have them write all the names down. Ask for a volunteer to call off all the names.

Now tell the students that there are all sorts of such techniques - not only memory techniques but studying, problem solving and test taking techniques - that will now help them become "A" students. Many of these are found on pages 178-193 in Towards Greater Freedom and Happiness. The first one you want to introduce them to is the SQ3R method (page 185 TGFH).

(c) **The SQ3R Method**

First, ask for a show of hands of how many find that a major problem in doing their reading assignments is that their mind tends to wander off. "Well the SQ3R method will help eliminate this problem. It will guarantee that you will now be able to stay focused on what you are reading."

Now have the students do an actual SQ3R assignment in class on a specific chapter from your class work. Follow this with a quiz using questions similar to the ones created from the headings of each of the chapter sections.

Prior to the quiz have them go through the breathing - hand warming technique. From this point on have the students turn in an SQ3R assignment for each chapter you assign to be read. Follow each with a quiz as above.

[Make plans to eventually go through each of the additional memory, learning and problem solving techniques outlined on pages 178-190 of TGFH. In each case follow the previous format - e.g., demonstrating the technique followed by appropriate assignments and quizzes.]

6. **The Concentration Spiral**

"You are now ready for what many consider the most powerful of the MOM techniques. If for some reason there is still some lingering doubt as to the real power of a focused mind; if you still have any doubt about your ability to relax in any situation now; if you still have any doubts that you have a powerful enough mind to become an "A" student; you will find that the Concentration Spiral Demonstration will quickly dispel any such doubts."

For this procedure you can use either an actual spiral with motor or the spiral in the video-taped presentation of the MOM techniques. Both are equally effective. Before starting the spiral spinning, tell them that "Everything you are going to see in the spinning spiral is naturally there. But most people do not see them because their minds are not sufficiently focused. By going through the steps I will lead you through, your mind will become more and more focused and you will begin to see all these things." The following are the different steps to go through with the students:

(a) Have them first look for a waviness or fuzziness in the lines of the spinning spiral.

(b) Next look for a yellowish, fluorescent-like fringe to the black lines.

(c) Next tell them: "Every now and then the spiral will appear to grow, especially if you look towards the edges. It will appear to come out towards you and begin to take on a three-dimensional effect like a whirlpool."

(d) "You will also become aware of dark rays seeming to spin off the edge of the spiral."

"All of these phenomenon are positive signs that your mind is progressively becoming more focused and your imagination and mind are coming more under your control."

(e) "Program in that you are in a spiral tunnel which is speeding away from you as if you were in a train traveling through the tunnel and looking out the rear window."

(f) "Now imagine yourself looking up at the top of a deep well. Feel yourself sinking into the deep spiral well as you continue to look up at the top. Now you can reverse this; see yourself looking down at the bottom of the well and feel yourself rising."

(g) "All the while you've been gazing at the spiral your mind has automatically become more and more concentrated. In this highly focused state your mind comes to act like a powerful magnifying glass intensifying whatever you focus on, especially your positive thoughts. Now to see how focused your mind has become, at the count three I'm going to ask you to look away from the spiral at some particular object and see if it becomes magnified. [The best type of object to use here is a large plant. Another would be the large clock in the room. If you are using the spiral in the video tape, be sure to have them, at this point, look away from the video and then directly at the object (the plant or clock). At this point you will find the students letting out all sorts of 'oohs' and 'aahs'. After a few seconds of this, instruct them to now look back at the spiral.]

(h) "Now looking back at the spiral. As you continue to look at the spiral, a feeling of peace will begin coming over you, a nice warm peaceful feeling. And as this happens let your eyes close."

(i) "Now in this highly focused state you can program in your goal of the moment and know that it will get through and stick."

"You now know how truly powerful your mind is and that there is no doubt that you now have the power to become an 'A' student."

"Picture yourself now using the SQ3R method. And see yourself calmly and confidentially taking a test on the material and getting an A. See yourself using the breathing technique to calm you down and clear your head anytime you start to get the least bit nervous. To intensify this feeling of inner calm right now, focus on your breathing. As you let out each breath let go completely. Feel a warm feeling coming into your hands. Now as you slowly open your eyes, you will continue to feel calm confident and in control."

7. Some Final Thoughts

For maximum results try to stay as close to the above outline as possible. However, if for example, you don't have the Spiral, you could get by with just the Lemon, Arms and Pendulum demonstrations. Most of the program will be applicable to all grades on up through college, some even to kindergartners (they love the Stress Cards).

For best results, it is recommended that each teacher have: (1) A copy of Towards Greater Freedom and Happiness ($9.95); (2) A set of Stress Cards - one per student ($1.00 each); and (3) The video of the MOM presentation which includes the Spiral ($16.95). These can be ordered through the SPC Center (1-800-STA CALM). Also, please do not hesitate to call this # if you have any questions regarding procedure or whatever.